



PARKS, RECREATION, NATURAL AREAS, AND TRAILS ELEMENT

- Creating and preserving Renton's parks, recreation, natural areas, and trails -

■ DISCUSSION

Parks, trails and natural areas create opportunities to recreate, connect people and build community, protect natural resources, and offer places for quiet reflection to experience nature. The City of Renton strives to provide access to parks, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, natural areas and trails, and focuses on developing a unique and varied system. Renton's natural areas are a critical link between people and their environment, build stewardship ethic and attract residents and businesses. Planning for natural areas provide a balance between public access to natural areas with the need to protect and conserve natural resources. Alternatively, Renton's developed parks offer a wide range of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities supporting the vision for healthy and active lifestyles. Recreation programming connects people, builds community, fosters volunteerism and creates long term partnerships, especially with other major community resources. The goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan are intended to illustrate the desired future for the community, while giving the Community Services Department the flexibility it needs to achieve these goals.



Park trail, Credit: City of Renton

■ GOALS

P-A: Parks, Recreation and Natural Resource Areas provide the opportunity for the community to connect to, participate in, support and encourage a healthy environment and active lifestyle.

P-B: Support a city where residents and visitors can recreate and exercise, contributing to a healthy lifestyle and where using an integrated trails/road network becomes a realistic transportation alternative.

■ POLICIES

Policy P-1: Expand parks and recreational opportunities in new and existing locations with an identified need, in order to fill gaps in service and keep pace with future growth.

Policy P-2: Create a connected system of parks corridors, trails and natural areas that provides nearby and accessible opportunities for recreation and non-motorized transportation.

"City parks offer children the daily benefits of direct experience with nature – the motivation to explore, discover and learn about their world and to engage in health-promoting, physical activity" (City Parks Forum, American Planning Association).



Playground at Gene Coulon Memorial Park, Credit: City of Renton



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Boats docked at Gene Coulon Memorial Park, Credit: City of Renton

Policy P-3: Cultivate strong, positive partnerships at the local and regional level with public, private and non-profit organizations in order to unite community efforts to develop and sustain the park system.

Policy P-4: Create a distinct identity that celebrates the natural, historic and diverse character of the community through park and facility design, recreation programming, interpretation and education.

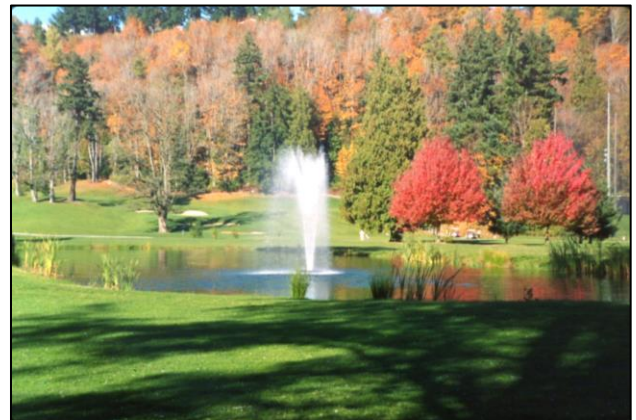
Policy P-5: Ensure long-term economic and environmental sustainability in system planning, design, operation, maintenance and decision making.



The Piazza, Credit: City of Renton

Policy P-6: Promote healthy and active lifestyles and build community through programs that are inclusive, fun and accessible for a diverse population.

Policy P-7: Protect, conserve and enhance the area's diverse natural resources for the long-term health of ecosystems, and for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.



Water feature at Maplewood Golf Course, Credit: City of Renton

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

The Washington Recreation and Conservation Office requires the City to adopt a specific parks plan every six years to maintain eligibility for State and Federal grant funding. The following plans have been adopted:

- Parks, Recreation and Natural Areas Plan – Adopted November 7, 2011 by Resolution #4123
- Renton Trails and Bicycle Master Plan – Adopted May 11, 2009 by Resolution #4005